

## **Minutes from Howard County Commission on Veterans and Military Families**

03 May 2018

ATTENDANCE: Jonathan Branch, Craig Porterfield, Robert Gillette, Wanda Riddle, Michael Blum, Howard Mooney, Lisa Terry    GUESTS: Bob Pelletier, Tom Glenn, Ed Hall, Bob Chew, Ronna Corman-Chew, Cecily Christian (RET USAF), COL Lou Schott, Chris Yates

- The meeting began at 7:00pm.
- An official from Howard County explained the Living Well program in Howard County. She emphasized veterans sponsoring a program as well as being trained to administer the program.
- The minutes from the March meeting were reviewed and approved. Our next meeting is on June 7. It will be our last meeting before the commission summer break. The September meeting will be on September 6.
- Bob Gillette expressed some concerns regarding the legal limits of the commission's recognition program. Mike reminded us that the veterans' monument was birthed from the veteran's commission. A discussion followed. Howard suggested that any change in language for the recognition program, especially relate to monetary contributions, be sent to Lisa.
- Lisa reviewed the Veterans Resource Fair and thanked all participants. Ed suggested that we have an after-action report before our next meeting. There were aspects of the fair that he was not pleased with. (i.e. the speaker, location, lack of veterans) A discussion followed. Howard suggested that we put the concerns on the agenda for the next meeting. Howard Community College was suggested as a good location for the next veterans fair. A discussion followed.
- Howard mentioned the Vietnam Veterans events. Tom attended one of them and felt that it was very worthwhile.
- Bob and Howard attended the planning board meeting. It covered the Columbia Lakefront final development plan. Part of that plan is where the monument will sit. A discussion followed.
- Bob L. did not have an update for veteran's court in Howard County. He did mention some actions occurring on the federal level. A discussion followed.
- Ed gave an update about the veteran's parking initiative. He mentioned several groups that want to take on the challenge of pushing the parking sign initiative. A discussion followed.
- Bob reported on the Veterans Foundation Update. The planning board approved the land for the monument project. The next challenge is what agency in the county will control that land. A discussion followed.
- Ed gave an update on Veterans Day presentations to Howard County Schools.
- Howard gave an update on HB 362 and SB 512 which will eventually exempt military retirement from state taxes. Governor Hogan supports the bill.
- Wanda gave an update on the Howard County Veterans Day Parade planning committee. Ed also contributed to the update. Lisa mentioned that the step off will be at 11:11am on that day.

- Lisa discussed the veteran's commission budget and stated that we haven't really spent any money A discussion followed.
- Ed gave an update on the veteran's preferred business initiative. Howard stated that the commission cannot give a preferred status to a business. It can be given by the Joint Military Council. A discussion followed.
- Howard stated that the Health Department will discuss their strategic plan at the June meeting.
- Lisa mentioned that there will be a flag raising ceremony at 8:00am at the Harriett Tubman school. All veterans have been invited.
- Howard stated any issues wanted on the June agenda should be sent to Howard. Lisa reviewed her most recent activities related to the Veterans Commission.
- Bob mentioned the commissioned FaceBook page. He suggested that the page be converted to the Howard County Foundation page. A discussion followed.
- Lisa mentioned that 182 Howard County seniors benefitted from the county's new senior property tax credit.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Submitted by Jonathan K. Branch